

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claim 7 if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objects to claims 6 and 13 because of minor informalities.

Specifically, the Examiner states that in claim 6, line 3, the phrase “the compensation” lacks proper antecedent basis. In response, claim 6 has been cancelled, thereby rendering the rejection moot.

In claim 13, line 4, the Examiner states there is a spelling error in the word “tine”. Claim 13 has been amended to recite the correct word “time”.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to the claims.

Claims 1-2, 4-6 and 8-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,445,767 B1 to Karella (hereinafter “Karella”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,057,552 to Stettner et al. (hereinafter “Stettner”).

In response, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation of allowable dependent claim 7, and specifically, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of dependent claims 5, 6 and 7. As the matter recited in independent claim 1 was originally recited in the dependent claims, Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added by way of the amendment to claim 1. Further, as the dependent claims have already

been considered by the Examiner, no new issue is raised by way of the amendment to independent claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 1-2, 4-6 and 8-14, and respectfully request allowance of claims 1, 2, 4 and 8-14.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorney would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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